

# ALTO FRIO BAPTIST ENCAMPMENT

## **Handbook for Sponsors 2011**

All sponsors must receive a copy of this handbook and become familiar with it's contents.

This handbook is intended to help make your job easier. Please share any suggestions that might help to make this a better tool for your use.

This Encampment operates under an annual permit issued by the Texas Department of Health. We are required to operate according to the requirements of the Texas Youth Camp Safety and Health Act. Our policies, rules, and procedures reflect those requirements.

## **RESTRICTIONS**

No alcoholic beverages, tobacco in any form, narcotics or illegal drugs of any kind are permitted on the Encampment grounds.

The Encampment is designated as a **NON-SMOKING AREA**.

No group may sell food or refreshments of any kind.

Speed limit for vehicles is 20 MPH.

Motorcycles, ATVs, scooters, and skateboards are prohibited.

Water pistols and the like are prohibited.

Shaving cream fights, etc. will not be allowed.

Firearms and fireworks are not allowed.

Guests may not bring pets on the Encampment grounds.

Only Encampment employees are allowed in the kitchen area of the Dining Hall.

Do not leave campers unsupervised in dorms.

Pay phones are provided for personal calls. Please respect others needs to use them.

Shoes must be worn outside the dorm on the Encampment grounds.

Swimsuits may not be worn in the Dining Hall or any meeting facility.

Swimming or wading in the river is strictly prohibited when no Encampment lifeguard is on duty.

Maintenance Area is off limits to campers and sponsors.

Challenge Course area is off limits except when supervised by Encampment personnel.

Do not throw trash on grounds.

Keep doors and windows to dorms closed.

Do not change settings on thermostats or tamper with covers.

Do not use fire extinguishers. In case of fire **VACATE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY**.

Do not iron clothes on carpet or mattresses.

Do not move beds in dorms or from dorm to dorm.

Do not take food or drink into meeting rooms.

Do not write or carve on furniture.

Staff quarters are off limits to campers and sponsors.

Do not take campers to remote areas of the Encampment after dark. **DO NOT CROSS RIVER OR FENCES FOR ANY REASON.**

Dress while at camp should meet the highest Christian ideals. No two piece swimsuits, short shorts, inappropriate or sleeveless shirts. Campers and sponsors will be asked to change if clothing draws unnecessary attention. (Campers wearing two-piece swimsuits will be asked to change or to cover up with a colored t-shirt)

## **PRINCIPLES FOR CONDUCTING A CABIN DEVOTION**

1. Base all teaching on scripture, not opinion.
2. Involve the campers.
3. Stay on track.
4. Pass on by questions that are not pertinent.
5. Avoid talking over campers' heads.
6. Use variety
  - a. Discuss a question as a group with you as moderator.
  - b. Give a verse or two to look up and discuss with them.
  - c. Ask open-ended questions and get different answers.
  - d. Tell a story.
  - e. Use a visual.
  - f. Try an object lesson.
  - g. Use a devotional book (but not every night).
  - h. Let one of the campers give a devotional.
  - I. Allow opportunity for testimonies.

## **HOW TO BECOME A SPONSOR-FRIEND**

1. Be ready to listen.
2. Talk on his level. Keep it simple.
3. Exhibit a positive attitude. It is contagious.
4. Stay neutral. Listen in confidence.
5. Be honest and sincere.
6. Be prayerful.

## **REMEMBER, EVEN APPEARANCES ARE IMPORTANT**

Child abuse in any form will not be tolerated. This could include improper touching, abusive or suggestive language, or striking a child.

Avoid compromising situations. Children can mistake well-meaning attention as sexual misconduct.

According to Texas State Law, Child Abuse or Sexual Abuse, real or alleged, must be reported to proper authorities for investigation.

## **SUPERVISION**

Camp Directors, Leaders, and Sponsors are responsible for the enforcement of all policies and rules, and the supervision of their groups at all times.

This Encampment operates as a closed campus and anyone leaving the camp grounds must have the permission of his Camp Director. Visitors must register with the Encampment, pay all fees, and their presence must be approved by the Camp Director. Visitors not directly involved in the program of the camp are discouraged.

The Encampment curfew is midnight. Curfew for individual camps may be earlier but not later.

Prescription drugs must be deposited with the Camp Nurse, and will be dispensed per prescription at the First Aid Station.

Vehicles must remain parked in designated areas except for special permission granted by the Encampment Manager at the request of the Camp Director.

All groups using the pool or riverfront must be accompanied by one sponsor for every ten children or youth.

Violation of Encampment Policies and Rules may result in expulsion from the Encampment with no refund of any fees paid.

Users are responsible for any/all damages to the Encampment property.

All facilities must be left clean and in order to avoid a cleaning surcharge. Pick up trash. Make sure all personal items are taken with you.

Emergency messages will be delivered to the Camp Director. Personal messages will be delivered at meal times.

Familiarize yourself with the Emergency Procedures included in this booklet and posted in the dorm, and share needed information with the campers.

Only the Encampment Registration and Medical Information Form is acceptable for registration. Campers will not be allowed to remain on the grounds without this completed, signed form.

No one from your group should enter any locked building or facility. This will be considered trespassing.

All campers going to the First Aid Station must be accompanied by a sponsor.

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## HOW TO BE A SUCCESSFUL SPONSOR

### HOW TO COOPERATE WITH GOD

1. You are at camp to win kids to Jesus Christ, and/or to build them up to serve Him. You are not on vacation. You are not here to be a babysitter, but a leader and a guide.
2. See your job for exactly what it is, a ministry. Being a sponsor means giving, giving, giving. If you do a good job being a sponsor, you will work harder than you do at just about any other time. Your day may start as early as 6:00 am and not end until very late. But no one will be prodding you to do it. You will be expected to be on time, to participate, to cooperate, but no one will be dogging your steps to make you do it. Let God minister through you this week.
3. Don't worry about your shortcomings. Put yourself in God's hands. Let Him begin to mold you into that servant of the Lord that you really want to be. God is able! Just get self out of the way!
4. Follow the plan your Camp Director has given you. The Director and staff have a purpose for everything. Hundreds of details have been thought through in advance, so go with the plan and forget the complaining. People make the camp effective, but people can be the biggest problem too. Some people specialize in creating problems, why don't you vow to the Lord to be a part of the solution.
5. Realize that you are part of a team. As part of the team at camp, you need to function together with the other leaders and sponsors in unity to accomplish God's purposes in young lives. Encourage and help one another. Stand together.

### SOME IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. Being a sponsor takes time. Plan for it. Make it happen.
2. Keep the confidence of the campers. Something may be humorous to you, but not to him.
3. Maintain a cheerful objectivity. Getting emotionally involved will not help at all. You are the adult. Act like it.
4. Be careful in giving advice. Guide the camper to come up with solutions.
5. Expect patterns of behavior. For example, children often make little problems into big problems. Be a stabilizer.
6. Don't be afraid to consult other sponsors or leaders.
7. Encourage independence from you, dependence upon God.
8. Don't make promises to campers you cannot or should not keep.
9. Intentionally violating Encampment Policies and Rules is NOT part of the camping experience. Do not encourage it or allow it to happen.
10. Do not be alone with campers in a one on one situation. Always be within view of others.
11. Do not allow yourself to be put in possible compromising situations.

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## **Emergency Procedures**

Every sponsor and camp leader needs to be informed as to procedures to be followed in case of emergencies. It is not possible to cover all situations completely, but leaders should realize that some circumstances call for 'common sense' action. In an emergency, the key phrase is **"keep calm"**.

### **TORNADO/FLOOD**

Alto Frio staff will monitor the news. In the event of threatening weather and/ or flood conditions, sponsors will be responsible for the orderly evacuation of the dorms and insure that all campers are directed to the cafeteria building. The loud speaker will be used as a warning system. If a camper is caught in the open when a storm strikes, he/she should take cover in a depressed or low area of open ground. Do not get under a tree.

### **SNAKE BITE**

Apply a restriction (belt or wide cloth), above and below the bite, but not tightly enough to halt blood circulation completely. Keep bitten area lower than the heart if possible. Transport to the hospital at once.

### **AFRICANIZED BEES**

Campers should avoid and not agitate any nest or swarm of bees. Someone should be posted to keep other campers from approaching and someone else should go to the camp office to report the bees. If a camper is stung, medication is available at the First Aid Station.

### **CHILD ABUSE**

If a sponsor discovers evidence of child abuse or sexual molestation, it should be immediately reported to the Camp Director and the Administrator. Advice on procedures to follow can be obtained by calling the abuse hotline (1-800-252-5400). **We are obligated by law to report all incidents of child abuse.**

### **INTRUDERS**

An intruder is anyone that is not registered at the camp office. This may include parents of campers or even church staff. The camp office should be notified if you suspect there is someone in camp who does not belong. Anyone acting suspiciously should be reported. Campers and sponsors should not be in remote areas of the camp late at night.

### **FIRE/BRUSH FIRES**

Evacuate the building. Campers should be directed to meet at the cafeteria building in case of a fire. Sponsors should point out to campers the exits in the dormitories. All dormitories should have directions to exits posted. Report any missing signs to the camp office. Campers are not authorized to use fire extinguishers under any circumstances.

### **DROWNING**

No camper or sponsor should be in the river or the pool without an Alto Frio lifeguard on duty. Rescue attempts should not be made that endanger other lives. All swimming related accidents/incidents should be reported immediately to a lifeguard.

### **ALL INJURIES AND/OR ILLNESSES SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE CAMP NURSE.**

Campers must be accompanied by a sponsor to the First Aid Station